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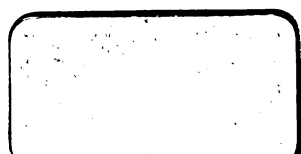
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A BYGONE OXFORD.

BY

FRANCIS GOLDIE, S.J.



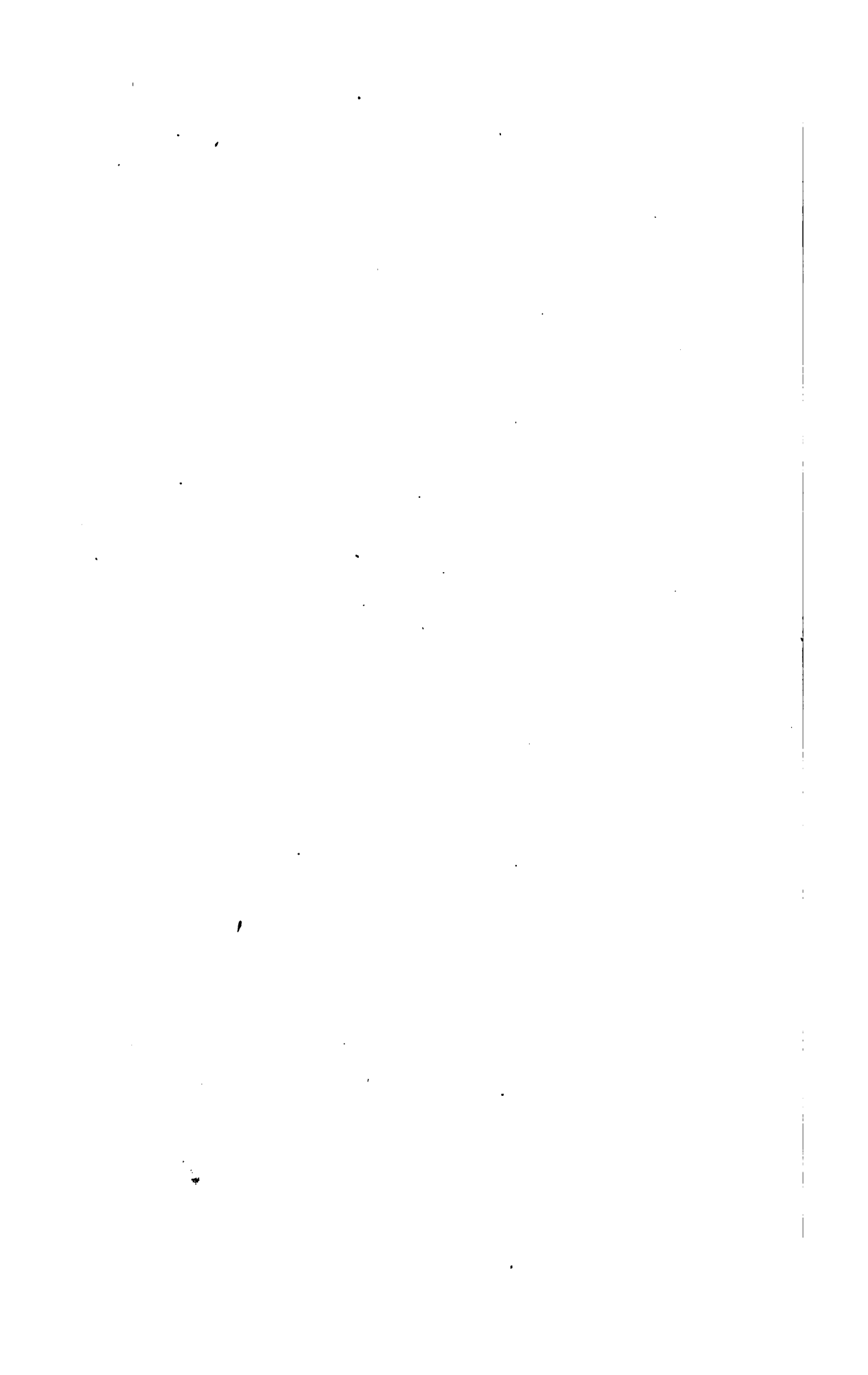
73

LONDON: BURNS AND OATES.

OXFORD: THOS. SHRIMPTON AND SON.

1881.

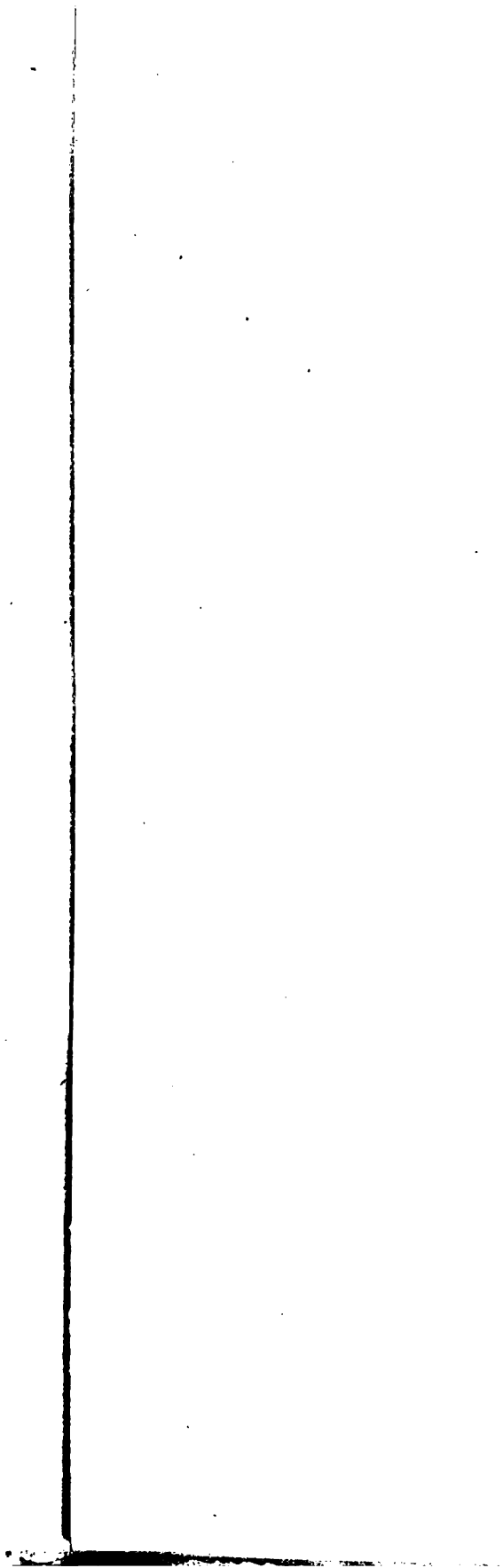
*Gough Adds Oxon
8ⁿ 216.*



"BYGONE OXFORD" was read during the Easter term as a lecture before a Society in Oxford, and at the request of the audience afterwards appeared in the September number of the MONTH. In consequence of the subject being originally prepared for a lecture, the author neglected to note down his authorities. It has since been carefully revised and in part re-written. But it was then too late to give the various references. The sources were chiefly Peshall, Anthony à Wood, whose *MS. Collectanea* proved of great value, Brewer's *Monumenta Franciscana*, the *Bibliotheca Carmelitana*, Ossinger's (Joannes Felix) *Bibliotheca Augustiniana, historica, critica et chronologica*, Echard's *Scriptores Dominicani*, Wadding's *Annales*, and Dugdale's *Monasticon*.

The author must make special acknowledgment to Canon Bright, and to Mr. Parker, jun., for some valuable corrections which they kindly suggested.

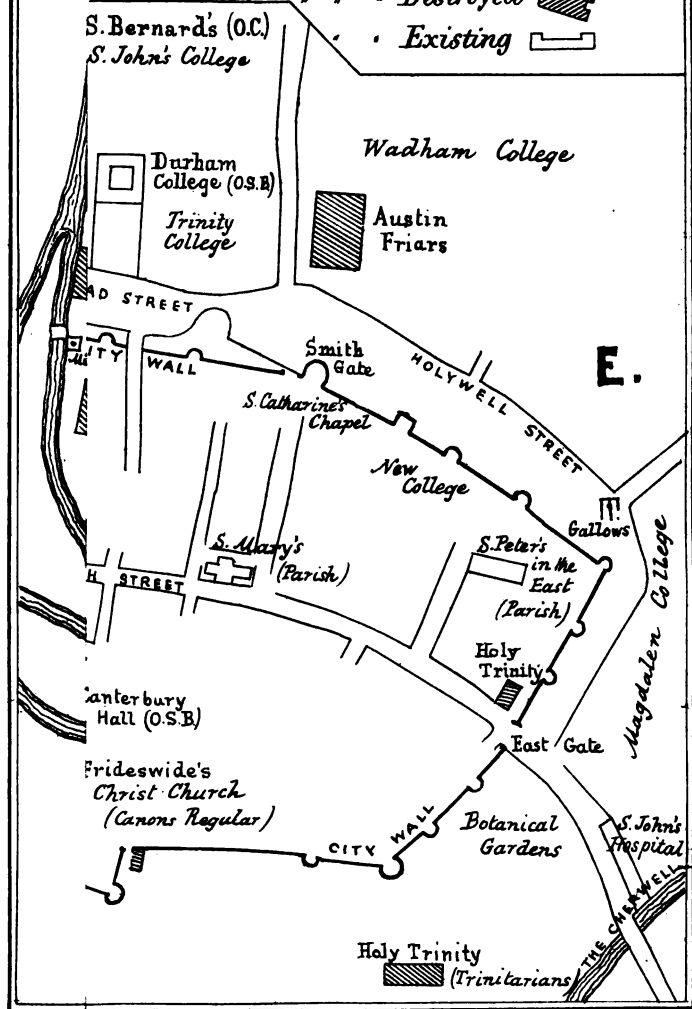
Oxford, 1880.



PLAN TO ILLUSTRATE A BYGONE OXFORD.

Old Religious Houses: S. Bernard's

• • • Destroyed 
• • • Existing 



A Bygone Oxford.

It was a close, dull day in the end of June. The Bodleian was almost deserted. A solitary German student was working hard in one of the compartments. The officials were quiet at their posts. The few strangers who passed lazily along the show cases of the Bodleian proper seemed awed with the *genius loci*, and did not dare to break in upon its silence. I was seated in a corner of the Selden Library, one of Dugdale's charming folios before me, wading through the chartulary of an Oxford abbey. The slight rustle of the leaves in Exeter College Garden heard through the open casement, faint bursts of soft music from the organ in the Sheldonian were the only sounds that reached me, as struggling with sleep I tried to finish the long list of donations in the charter before me.

I was on the Thames, broad and bright, the trees on its banks in their fullest glory. The meadows were crowned with long rich grass. The cattle on the pastures were browsing in the shade. The boat was a strange craft, not made by Clasper; but the boatman was stranger, and his language strangest of all. It was with difficulty I could understand what seemed a very intensified *patois* of Oxford countryfolk. I was aware that I was on my way from Abingdon with letters commendatory from the Lord Abbot to the Abbot of Osney and to the heads of other religious houses of Oxford. Iffley was passed, and the long pastures of ~~Horspath~~ *Cowley*, though we had been stayed at more than one lock and paid more than one toll with sundry mutterings of the boatman at the greed of churchmen who, so he seemed to think, had made those locks simply to lighten his purse. And now the city walls of Oxford came in sight with a cluster of many towers and spires rising over them and around them. We caught a glimpse of Corpus Christi College shining brightly in its newness, by its elder sister of Merton, beneath the graceful spire of St. Frideswide's. The boat shoots at last under the arches of the Great Bridge. It is crowned by

a lofty gateway, to which my boatman points and straightway crosses himself, as he mutters the name of the great wizard friar who used from that vantage point to search for answers amidst the stars. He doffs his cap to St. Nicholas' Chapel, where dwelt the hermit, so called, the custodian of the bridge.

And now there comes in view a sight quite unfamiliar. Grey enclosure walls coming down to the waterside girdle in a vast religious house, over which towers a stately church. Beyond it and confused with it is another group of buildings, out of which rises another church not less sumptuous, to which the many towers of the castle serve as a background. Across park-like meadows, bosky gardens, and long avenues, surrounded on both sides by broad streams, the Monarch of the Scene is a cathedral-looking church. As it is due north, it stands up against the sky a vast pile some three hundred and fifty feet in length; one lofty and massive tower at its west end, another but smaller at the intersection of the transepts and nave. Now the boat rounds the promontory on which stands the nearest religious house, and while the neighbouring group of buildings and the great church opposite, with the abbey at its feet, become more visible, another abbey comes in sight, further on in front, and only less stately than those nearer hand. And as we pass beneath antique bridges and near foaming mill-races, two other monastic buildings are seen, behind and beyond the great castle, but still outside the city walls,—one a picturesque group of various roofs, out of which rises a noble chapel, with pleasant gardens stretching to the waterside; the other towering over it with a half palatial look, with a church and spire, from whose tower rang out a merry peal of bells.—It was an Oxford, but not the Oxford that I know. The gas-works, the dreary streets that run down to the Isis, the big breweries, the unsightly railway stations, and their still more unsightly sidings, that now are, were not. It was a vision of Oxford as it was before the spoiler had gone forth, before the Friars Minor and Friar Preachers, before the monks of Osney and of Rewley had been driven out and their houses of prayer and study levelled to the ground, before the Religious of Mount Carmel had been forced to give up to Henry the Eighth the palace which his ancestor had dedicated to God.

The big bell of Bodley boomed, swinging leisurely on its wheel. I lifted up my head from the open pages of Dugdale on which it had fallen. A vision of beauty was gone. I could

only grope for the dead bones from which it had sprung and strive again laboriously to reconstruct by further study the fair dream I had dreamt that day. And to come down to a matter-of-fact world, it is hard to realize that this is no dream, but a feeble presentment of an historic past.

The visitor to Rome, however slightly acquainted he may be with its past history, is constantly confronted by ruins which tell him that the city of to-day is built over another city grander and greater as earthly things go. The visitor to Oxford feels at once that he is in an old world city, whose very streets and domestic buildings seem of a distant past. Magdalen and New, and the great quadrangle of Christ Church, by contrast with our manufacturing towns of yesterday, tell of a period so distant that one never imagines that buildings—perhaps greater and grander still—existed before these Colleges were thought of. And yet a little investigation will prove this to have been the case. May I offer myself as a guide, not because I know much, but because I have learned enough to regret that more is not known, and with the hope that others more fitted will fill in the study I venture roughly to sketch?

ST. FRIDESWIDE'S.

One monastic building yet remains to Oxford, if not in its entirety, yet sufficiently perfect to give some notion of what we have lost by the greed of Henry the Eighth and the zeal of his reforming, but not unselfish, abettors. The building remains, but carefully stripped, under three reigns, of all that art and self-sacrifice had done to make glorious the house of God. And fortunately, for it was owing to no special reverence on the part of its preservers, this building, which was spared in the general wrecking, was the most venerable and the most venerated of all its peers. Familiar to every one who has seen Oxford is the Early English spire of Christ Church, rising out of the noble buildings of Wolsey's College. How many remember that this spire marks out the sanctuary which was the nucleus around which City and University gathered! In the troubled days of the Saxon period, somewhere in the eighth century a subregulus, a petty king of some sort, was ruler in Oxford. Tradition calls him Didanus, which Dr. Ingram boldly translates into Æthelbald, the powerful King of the Mercians. But I fear Æthelbald might stand better for Algarus, the villain

of the story.¹ The wife of Didanus, the Lady Safrida, bore him a daughter so given to a life of prayer and penance, that when Safrida died—in 727(?)—he built a church and convent for his gentle Frideswide. Into its enclosure she retired with twelve companions. A Prince Algarus had lost his heart to the holy maiden, and in his lust and power despised her solemn vows to God, and would have carried her away by force. With but two companions she dropped secretly down the river to Bendon or Abingdon, some ten miles off, where the seedling of the great abbey had lately been planted. There St. Frideswide lay concealed in an outhouse bowered with ivy. The tyrant, baulked of his prey, threatened to destroy Oxford unless he were told where she lay hid. But close by the North Gate, near St. Michael's Church of to-day, he was stricken with sudden blindness. Some say that he went home unrepentant and blind. Others that he straightway asked God for his sight for St. Frideswide's sake, and it was restored to him. Nor till Henry the Third's time did any monarch after that dare to enter her church. Three years later our Saint returned to Oxford. But she sought for a deeper solitude in the marshes of Binsey, and in the quiet of the streamlet-girdled woods of a semi-island she built herself an oratory. At her prayers a well gushed up at the west end of the church. It is still known as St. Margaret's, and became so famous for its healing powers that a large village with twenty-four inns was built hard by, of which no vestige now remains. After her death, on the 19th of October, *circa* 740, St. Frideswide's body was buried in the convent church at Oxford, which changed its name from St. Mary's to St. Frideswide's, and our Saint became the Patroness of the town. Her festival was kept on the anniversary of her death, and was celebrated most solemnly.

In the hideous massacre of the Danes planned by Æthelred the Unready, the fugitives from Oxford took shelter in the tower of St. Frideswide's Church, and as the place could not be taken by storm, fire was put to the building—it was probably built of wood—and it was utterly destroyed. The royal murderer—let us hope—repented of his crime, as useless as it was vile, and not only rebuilt the church, but endowed it with fresh gifts of land. The charter in behalf of "myn own mynster" "in Oxenford" was signed on the octave day of St. Andrew *circa* 1004 by the King, by

¹ Cf. Lingard, *History of England*, 1849, vol. i. p. 137.

Archbishop Ælfric of Canterbury, Archbishop Wolstan of York, and by many a bishop and by many a noble. It is not clear what priests served the minster at this time, for the place, like the Abbey at Bath, had ceased to be a house of religious women during the Danish invasions. It seems to have been alternately a collegiate church with secular canons, and a monastic foundation.

About 1111 or 1121, a learned priest named Guimond was Court chaplain to Henry the First, and he took it ill that while his dissolute and tyrannical prince nominated to bishoprics and benefices men who were but slightly educated, the learned clergy were passed by. So, when saying Mass before the King on one of the Rogation Days, he came in the Epistle of the day, taken from the fifth chapter of St. James, to the well-known passage: "And it rained not for iii. years and vi. months," he pretended to blunder over the Roman numerals, and read it as follows: "And it rained not for one, one, one years, and five, one months." The courtiers smiled at the chaplain's apparent ignorance, and when Henry afterwards rebuked him for it, Guimond answered: "You give benefices to people who read just like that. Know, sire, that henceforward I will be the courtier of none but the Great King Who grants not mere temporal but eternal favours to His servants." So Guimond left the world for the cloister, and when the Bishop of Salisbury, Roger, the King's Chancellor, installed the Canons Regular of St. Augustine in St. Frideswide's, that prelate placed Guimond over them as their first Prior. Henry, who with all his faults was magnificent and royal in his gifts, endowed the Priory with large possessions, probably restitution of property alienated at the Conquest. He gave among other gifts the livings of All Saints, St. Peter le Bailey, St. Michael, half that of St. Aldate, and of two other city parishes, now no more, St. Edward's near King Edward's Street, and St. Mildred's, whose site is now occupied by the Hall of Exeter College. Henry presented also to St. Frideswide's the old home of the Virgin Saint at Binsey and the land round about, and a church was built there soon after, which spite of later alterations is standing to this day. Stephen and his rival, the Empress Maud, vied with each other in their grants to the shrine of Oxford's Patron Saint.

It was possibly under the active rule of the first Prior that the building of the church, much as it now stands, was begun

in earnest, and it was carried on zealously by Prior Robert the Bald, of Cricklade, and Philip his successor. It is not necessary to go into the archæological question as to how much, if any, of Æthelred's church was preserved in the Norman work of the Augustinian Priors. But Prior Robert was just the man fit to design and to carry out the grand church of which so much is left to us. He was a man of mark in his day. From the English Pope Adrian the Fourth he obtained the sanction of Papal confirmation of the property of his house. During his thirty years as Prior he held important posts in the University, and was Chancellor in 1159. His long term of office left so little for his successor to do that he was able in the first year of being Prior, 1180, solemnly to translate the relics of St. Frideswide from the chapel on the south side. Was this on the site of the Chapter House, where an old door with the zig-zag moulding has been said to have been the entrance into an older church? The Archbishop of Canterbury, the Bishops of Ely, Norwich, and St. David's, an Archbishop elect of St. Andrew's, with a Papal Nuncio to the King of Scotland, took part in the function, and God honoured His virgin Saint with miracles. Later on the beautiful Early English chapel alongside the north aisle was erected, and on Saturday, September 10, 1289, the relics were translated to this place, and laid in a new and more costly shrine, in presence of William de la Corner, Bishop of Salisbury, and Edmund Earl of Cornwall. The wooden chamber built above a rich perpendicular tomb between this chapel and the fourteenth century Latin Chapel, is pointed out as St. Frideswide's shrine, but it is most probably the watch-room, which served, as the similar oaken chamber in St. Alban's Abbey, to keep guard over the jewels which adorned the feretory. The place where the shrine stood is now marked by a graceful inscription. It was the Lady Chapel of the church, and remains of rich fresco still cling to the vault over head, while shattered fragments of the base on which the shrine reposed have been discovered, testifying to the elegance of its design. An effigy, probably that of the builder of the chapel, Prior Robert de Ewelme, reclines beneath a graceful canopy, close to where lay his sainted patroness. We find that St. Frideswide's remains were borne on great days to the high altar. Her feast was ordered by the Convocation of the Province of Canterbury in 1481 to be kept throughout the Province, the saint having

been canonized by the Pope together with SS. Osmund and Ethelreda. She has been honoured too for many centuries at Bomy, in the diocese of Arras, where, till the great Revolution, there was standing an oratory dedicated to her under the name of Ste. Frewisse. How great was the devotion to the Saint is shown by the long list of offerings to her shrine, by the endowments of lamps and chantries, by the solemn procession of the Chancellor and scholars of the University each Mid-Lent Sunday and Ascension Day, to pay their homage at her shrine, and by the numbers of pilgrims who came to pray before her tomb.

Among the last of these was the noble-hearted Katharine of Arragon. She was staying with her royal husband and a splendid Court at the Abbey of Abingdon, but her devotion made her push on to Oxford. Perhaps the troubles of St. Frideswide had their attraction for the sorely-tried Queen. She withdrew from the hearty state reception given her by the University men to pray in quiet at the shrine. This was in 1518.

Additions and adornments were still being made, for we find that James Zouch, whose tomb, stripped of its brass, is under the great window of the north transept, and who died in 1503—the pencases and ink-horns on the tomb mark him out as a lawyer by profession—left money to be spent on that transept.

But shortly after Katharine's visit, Cardinal Wolsey, then in the height of his power, obtained from Clement the Seventh the grant of the Priory, its buildings and lands, to create for the advancement of learning and the glory of his name the grandest College in Christendom. At the same time and for the same end the Pope gave him some other religious houses, which with a second grant amounted in all to about forty-two, and of which the revenues were valued at £2,000 of money of the time. Littlemore Convent, or the Mynchery, was one of these. The Papal Bull arrived in 1524, the religious of St. Frideswide's were transferred to other houses, their Prior Burton going to the Abbey of his Order at Osney, and the Cardinal at once began to make a clearance for his new building. And here our story rightly ends. But a word or two must be said on the ancient Priory and what remains of it now-a-days. Wolsey pulled down fifty feet of the church, which he began to remodel in the style of architecture fashionable in his day.

But even after so much of the church had been destroyed, there were no less than eight altars left, besides the high altar. He swept away also the west side of the Cloister. The Chapter House, the Slype or passage from the Cloister to the burial ground, the Prior's House, and the old Refectory, both now divided into rooms, still remain. A fire in what became the Chaplains' quadrangle, near the new wing looking on Christ Church Meadows, caused some other portions apparently of the old Priory at the south-eastern portion to be blown up in 1669. Where now is, or was, the fountain in Tom Quad stood St. Frideswide's Cross, from which, as from St. Paul's, sermons used to be preached. Wolsey had only completed his new kitchen and hall, and built in part the east, south, and west sides of the great quadrangle, and laid the foundations of a splendid chapel on the north, when he lost the favour of his King, whom he had served better than his God. Henry at once grasped all the revenues of the suppressed houses, and but for strong representations, the whole College would have been no more. As it was, the works were stopped, till after the surrender of the great abbeys the ruins of Abingdon and Osney made cheap quarries for the little the avaricious monarch chose to add to what his favourite had left unfinished. And in memory of its royal benefactor the name was changed from Cardinal's College into King's!

In 1539 lust of gold, under cover of hatred of superstition, stripped of its treasures the shrine of St. Frideswide, the centre and the reason of so many centuries of generous gifts. Some six years later we find from an inventory that there was still treasure to spoil in the sacristy of the church. There were pyxes, thuribles, crosiers, cruets, chalices, and chrismatories of silver and silver gilt, and amongst other vestments, fourteen copes of cloth of gold, and some sixteen more, and a set of High Mass vestments of red velvet embroidered with silver and pearls, and golden threads.

Hic requiescit religio cum superstitione—"Here lies religion with superstition," was the epitaph which some Elizabethan divine wrote over the bones of the virgin Saint, which had been dragged from their hiding-place and mingled with the remains of an apostate nun, called by courtesy, the wife of Peter Martyr, himself an apostate Canon Regular, whom Cranmer had made Canon of Christ Church, and Protector Somerset a Professor of Theology.

In the November of 1610, the gateway was adorned with the grim trophy of George Nappier's head. Son of an honourable Oxford family, to whom the old Manor House of Holywell then belonged, he had given his life cheerfully at the gibbet within the precincts of the Castle, for the faith of St. Frideswide, of Prior Guimond, and of those who had built the monasteries and colleges of Oxford.

OSNEY.

Little does the traveller imagine as the train passes by the cemetery, just outside the Great Western Station at Oxford, that he is going over the site of what was one of the grandest monastic piles of England. The Norman lords of Oxford, the D'Oyly, had gained great territory and power. In the reign of Henry the First, Edith, the wife of Robert D'Oyly, the second of that name, persuaded her husband to give the southern half of Osney, an island formed by the two branches of the river Isis, to found thereon a house of Canons Regular. "She used," says Leland, "to walk out of Oxford Castle with her gentlewomen for recreation, and that oftentimes; when in a certain place in a tree, as often as she came, certain magpies used to gather to it and there to chatter, and as it were to speak unto her. Edith much wondered at this matter, and was sometimes sore afraid as at a wonder." She asked advice of one Ralph, a Canon of Frideswide's, and he told her at once they were not birds but souls in Purgatory, asking that for their sakes she would build some building for the sake of God—as her husband's uncle had built and endowed the Collegiate Church of St. George within the Castle Garth. So with the approval of Archbishop Theobald of Canterbury, and of the diocesan Alexander of Lincoln, and being backed up by her sons, Edith obtained from her husband, a soft and pleasure-loving man, to devote all his lands in Osney Isle for the new foundations. Thus in 1129 a house of the Canon Regulars was founded. Small in its beginnings, like most things born to be great, the steady inpour of donations made it before long a rich and powerful Abbey. Robert D'Oyly added to his first grant magnificent endowments, all his property in and about Oxford, the Churches of St. George and St. Mary Magdalen, and the Church of Kidlington. The actual enclosure of the Abbey can be roughly stated to have been the southern portion of Osney island, of which the northern boundary

was an imaginary line drawn a little south of St. Thomas' Church near the railway stations. At present the site is occupied in great part by Osney Mill and the land around it, by St. Thomas' Cemetery, and the sidings and goods station of the Great Western Railway.

Crossing the bridge under the Castle, called of old Bookbinders' Bridge, into High Street St. Thomas', we turn to the left down the broad street called the Hamel, and then along the lane to the right, and we should have found the enclosure wall of the Abbey on our left, of which some still appears to exist. A few steps more would have brought us to the first and lesser gate of the Abbey, from which a row of buildings, bearing the beautiful name of *Domus Dei*—"God's House," stretched up to the Great Gate. It served as a home for poor scholars and retainers of the Abbey, and besides being endowed, alms were given in kind to the in-dwellers from the refectory of the Abbey. A small church facing the gate, and dedicated to St. Nicholas, served as a parish church for those who were subject to the Abbey. When their numbers increased, and access within the Castle walls to St. George's Church became practically impossible, St. Nicholas' was enlarged, and took the name by which we know it of St. Thomas'. There can be little doubt that it was in this church that the young Edmund of Abingdon, known to us as the sainted Archbishop of Canterbury, placed his ring upon the finger of an image of our Lady, as a pledge of his innocence amidst the wild licence of the thousands of youths of every country that then frequented the Oxford lecture halls. A statue of our Lady in a niche crowned the Great Gate, and on either side were sculptured the arms of St. George, and those of the D'Oyly, quartered with a pastoral staff, the armorial bearings of Osney. Many a meal given without stint has been received by weary tramps under the capacious shelter of its splendid vaults. Beyond you found yourself in a vast courtyard or "quad" of cut stone, with a conduit in its centre, from which the whole house was supplied. Then on your right you entered the cloisters, which stood at the west end of the Abbey Church, their oaken roof richly carved with the arms and rebuses of various benefactors, the chiefest of whom was Abbot Leech, who built three sides of the square. Opening off it on the south side, up a flight of stairs, was the spacious refectory, elaborately adorned with sculpture, which, too, was owing in great part to Abbot Leech, who rebuilt it about 1247. The kitchen was at the west

end, while further on to the south, beyond the refectory, and close by the Mill Race, was the firmory or infirmary for the sick monks, with a private chapel for their use. The dormitory, no doubt, occupied one side of the cloisters, possibly the northern portion. Another splendid building of Abbot Leech was the Abbot's House, which was at your right as you entered the great gate, adjoining the head of the mill stream. Its dining hall was fit for any palace, and kings and barons often were entertained there. Like the public refectory, it was approached by a noble flight of steps, broad enough for six men to go up abreast. There was a chapel, with kitchen, and stables attached to the house. Besides these buildings, there were the Frater house for the lay-brothers, the school house, brewhouses, and slaughter houses, the bakery, the mill, and the great barn, whilst numbers of workmen, as tailors, bookbinders, illuminators, and wax-chandlers, who lived outside the water gate, had their workshops within the Abbey precincts. The gardens, with avenues of elm trees, orchards, fish ponds, and dovescots, stretched southward to the waterside. The monks had also a tannery for leather and the much required parchment, on the old branch of the river below the mill stream.

But the central object of the Abbey is yet to be visited—the magnificent church, of which some idea can be gathered from old sketches of its ruins, from the curious window to Bishop King in the north aisle of Christ Church, and from descriptions by those who saw it in its glory and after its fall. The choir was long, as is usual in monastic churches, and a Lady chapel was projected at the east end. A magnificent tower rose over the intersection of the nave and transepts, and another still loftier was at the west end, bearing the finest peal of bells in England. Of these seven out of the ten were the gift of Abbot Leech. He it was also who, with the help of a good knight named Beaufort, built the nave and the Lady Chapel, as statues of these two worthies erected in the church did testify. Another Lady Chapel was built by Prior Thomas de Kidlington on the north side of the choir. The high altar was given by Prior Appleby, and was consecrated in 1267. There were other twenty-three altars, many in separate chapels, others, no doubt, affixed to the piers of the nave. Good William of Worcester, not always quite accurate in his measurements, writing in 1480, tells us that the total length, including the Lady Chapel at the east end, to the great western tower, was 332 feet, while the space under the

tower was 20 feet, making a total from east to west of 352 ; its width, with three aisles, 100 feet, surely the width of the transepts. The choir was bright with tapestry, the windows glowed with stained glass, rich carvings and statuary made arch and wall full of life and meaning. Splendid tombs of marble, incised slabs, and brasses, added to the glory of the church. Lady Edith, the foundress, reposed under an effigied tomb on the north side of the high altar. She was figured as one who had devoted herself to God, and bore in her hand a heart, while on the wall above was painted the story of her coming to Osney, and the trees with the chattering magpies.

The civil wars, the spread of Wicliffism, at least in its milder form of hatred of religious orders, perhaps, too, the immense wealth of the Abbey, all combined to diminish the number of vocations to the cloister. The appointment of Bishop King Suffragan Bishop of the diocese, a Cistercian monk, by Henry the Eighth as Abbot *in commendam*, to gather the wool and eat the fruits of what had been left for other ends, no doubt reduced still further the number of the community ; and when the hireling Abbot did as he was bid, and surrendered the Abbey to the new head of the Church in England, there were but twelve choir monks in the vast enclosure. This was in 1539. Two years later the same unfaithful shepherd got his reward, by being made, by the supreme authority of Henry, Bishop of a new see with the abbey church for cathedral. Gloucester Hall, of which we shall have to speak, was given as the palace of the Lord Bishop of Oxford. The Abbot's house became the deanery, and the Canons were installed in other parts of the monastic buildings.

But the Tudor Pope, as usual, wanted money, and as Pope, church lands were his by right. If St. Frideswide's must be preserved, it would be economy to make it serve two purposes, as chapel for what survived of Wolsey's College, and as cathedral for the new diocese which had been taken from the see of Lincoln. So Henry sold Osney to a rich clothier, one Stump, the same who turned the grand abbey church of Malmesbury into a cloth factory. But the royal vicegerent reserved to himself the church, the cloisters, and the wood. Then the work of demolition went on apace. We have some accounts which picture to us its ruin.

"Imprimis to Poppyng Jaye, the joiner, for taking down the stalls and sydes of the choir and high altar and other

things in the church for eight days. Item to Poppyng Jaye himself, three days for taking down the roof of the church. Paid to Mr. Raynolds for melting the lead of the church and casting it into sows. Paid to William Plummer for taking down the lead of the cloister." Henry was fond of lead, a valuable and marketable article. "Item for taking down the bells for six days. Item, four days for taking down the battlements of the church and upon the porch. Item, 26th September, for carriage of great bell to Frideswide." Again, "Slate at Osney kitchen taken down, the kitchen and fermory taken down. Item, to a labourer, pulling down stone at Osney Church for the masons that took the work to task at Frideswide's."

Only two bells of the ten existed uninjured in the days of Anthony à Wood. Two, one in his time, another then recast, bore inscriptions to our Lady.

In Queen Mary's reign enough of the church still remained for Mass to be said therein; perhaps it was the choir. The nave evidently was unroofed. But towers and walls were standing when Agas drew his map in Queen Elizabeth's days, and the central tower and vast portions of the wall existed till the sieges of Oxford in the Parliamentary Wars. King Charles' earthworks seem to have passed right over the site, and the abbey mill in his time became a powder mill. Bases of columns, coffins of lead, are still unearthed in the cemetery and by the mill. These and part of a barn close by are all that remain of the glories of our Lady of Osney.

THE BLACK FRIARS.

The Preaching or Black Friars lost no time after their institution in finding their way to the schools of Oxford. At the Second General Chapter of their Order, held at Bologna, under their glorious founder, St. Dominic, Father Gilbert of Frasinetto was sent in 1221 to England with thirteen friars. They came to Canterbury with Peter des Roches, the Bishop of Winchester, who on his return from Palestine had met them at Bologna, and were by him introduced to the Archbishop of Canterbury, Stephen Langton. When his Grace heard they were preachers, he bade one of them to take his place in a church where he had himself engaged to preach, and so pleased was he with the result, that ever after he showed himself a true friend and protector. Isabella de Vere, the widowed Countess of Oxford, had

chosen one of the Dominicans as her confessor, and the very first year of their arrival in England she gave them a site in the heart of the Jewry of Oxford, within the old parish of St. Edward's, somewhere behind the present Town Hall buildings, a site they had selected both because near to the public schools, which were then, as now, behind St. Mary's, and in the hope that they might be able to spread the faith among their Jewish brethren. The Fathers arrived on the 15th of August, a day of good augury for them. Their first Superior, Father John of St. Giles, was famed as a holy and learned theologian, as a successful professor, and as a skilful physician, and the great Bishop of Lincoln, Bishop Grostête, pays a high tribute in his letters to the Father's zeal. On the site granted to them, Father John erected an oratory and lecture rooms, Walter Mauclerk, Bishop of Carlisle, then Lord High Treasurer of the realm, who some years later—in 1246—resigned his bishopric, to put on the black and white habit of St. Dominic in that convent, gave them an additional plot of ground adjoining. Their house must have been of some importance, if it be true that the great Assembly of 1258, known by the name of the Mad Parliament, met within their walls. In this house the children of St. Dominic welcomed the sons of St. Francis on their arrival at the University. Whether, however, the site, as is probable, proved too circumscribed, or the Jews unconvertible, or the religious were annoyed by the rival claims of St. Frideswide's and St. Aldate's parochial authorities their chapel lying half in the one and half in the other parish, or whether it was all these causes combined to persuade them to seek other quarters, they moved to another site in 1259.

If you go down by the east end of St. Ebbe's Church into the uninviting region beyond it, you come across Friar Street and, further on, Blackfriars' Street, and at the river side we find Friars' Wharf. We are evidently on Dominican ground. In old days the city walls coming down from the castle on our right passed by Pembroke and Christ Church Colleges to where they still may be seen at the back of Merton College. Some remains of them exist in Brewer's Street. And just where that street runs into Littlegate Street there was, as the name suggests, Little or Water Gate, with one of the many streams of the Isis flowing outside it. This was called the Trill Mill Stream, and flows from the Castle Mills, near

which it diverges from another affluent and runs towards Christ Church Meadows. Now-a-days it is covered over, but its course is easily traced behind Paradise Square, under Bridge Street, through Rose Lane, and so across St. Aldate's Street, when it comes again into the light in Christ Church Meadows, and flows into the Isis below Folly Bridge. It is, as we shall see, an important boundary. Across that stream, Preachers' Bridge led you from Little Gate to the islet given by King Henry the Third to the friars. Another water-course flowing into Trill Mill Stream, and which used to run between Friars' and Blackfriars' Street, formed the northern boundary of the conventual property; while a stream running more or less parallel to what is now St. Aldate's, and was then Great Bridge Street, formed the western limit. Preachers' Entry, now Speedwell Street, gave access by a bridge from that side to the Blackfriars' Gate. The main stream of the Isis was the southern boundary. It is not easy to say how far the site extended westward. Henry's royal gift included a house with enclosures of three acres to the east, a grove on the west, and a messuage near the gate. Another benefactor, Richard the Miller, gave them property near their entrance into St. Aldate's Street.

The friars sold their old property in the Jewry to one Fitz Hamon, and with the proceeds, forty marks, and the donations of benefactors, they built themselves a handsome convent, which they entered in 1245, and a new church, which, as well as the convent, was dedicated to St. Nicholas, in which Mass was first said in 1246, on the anniversary of their entrance into Oxford just a quarter of a century before. But it was not till 1262 that it was completed and consecrated by Bishop Grostête, the fast friend of the Dominicans and Franciscans. Among their many benefactors was that "courteous and kind knight," Sir Peter Besills, of Besillsleigh, who built the great stone bridge of Abingdon. He erected the south aisle, besides leaving £120 for six stained glass windows. Building was still going on in Edward the First's reign, for that sovereign gave one hundred feet square of stone from one of his quarries at Wheatley in 1272. In 1280 there was such a flood on April 26 as had not been for thirty years, and the following Whit Sunday King Edward honoured the General Chapter of the Dominicans, which was held that year at Oxford, by his presence, and he made them a grant of some land to enable

them to protect themselves from future inundations. Nor was he the only royal personage who visited them. Edward the First, when Prince of Wales, stayed "with his folk" in the Lent of 1264 "at the Friar Preachers'."

As the bishops of the diocese had no residence in Oxford, they made the Dominicans' house their dwelling-place, whenever they came to the city. The schools, or lecture-halls, formed an important portion of the buildings. There were several, some for philosophy, some for theology. The public acts, or disputations of theology—by which scholars in those days, as is the case abroad, gained their degrees—took place in the chapter-house, or church, while those of philosophy came off in the cloisters. The library was well furnished for the times.

A history of the house would be a history of the Order in England and of the University in which, with the sister-house of the Franciscans, it played so prominent a part. Neither can the disputes between the University and the friars, disputes turning on the privileges granted them by the Holy See, have anything but this passing notice. We can merely mention some of the great men who lived and taught at St. Nicholas'. Robert Bacon, elder brother or uncle of the celebrated Franciscan, became a Dominican late in life, and having been long time a professor of theology, continued to teach it in the old schools at St. Edward's. He had been an intimate friend and a pupil of St. Edmund of Canterbury, and afterwards wrote his life. Richard Fisacre, one of the most learned men of his day, and a great admirer of Aristotle, was a bosom friend of Friar Bacon. They both taught together, and died in the same year. Robert Kilwarby was many years professor of philosophy at Paris and of theology at Oxford. Among his scholars was St. Thomas of Hereford, whose confessor he was, and with whom he was very intimate for the eleven years that he held the post of Provincial of the English Dominicans. He presided at the public defension when St. Thomas took his doctor's cap. Father Kilwarby became Archbishop of Canterbury, and finally Cardinal Archbishop of Porto. William Macclesfield, who had taken his doctor's degree in theology, no mere title of courtesy in those days, was named Cardinal Priest of Santa Sabina, the church of the convent hallowed by St. Dominic's presence at Rome. Benedict the Eleventh, who conferred on him this honour, was himself a Dominican, and had been General of the Order. The hat, however, only arrived when Father Thomas was in his

grave. Walter Joyce was made Primate of Ireland, and his brother Thomas Cardinal of Santa Sabina, dignities they both deserved by goodness and learning alike. Thomas is said to have been a pupil of the glory of his Order, St. Thomas Aquino, at Paris. It was when on an embassy from Edward the Third to Pope Clement the Fifth at Lyons that he received the purple. Cambridge contests with Oxford the glory of Robert Holcot of Northampton, who put off the ermine of a judge to become a friar, and as such spoke at the Council of Basle in defence of the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception. Among a host of eminent controversialists, Robert Dymock—was he of the family of hereditary champions?—was chosen by vote of the University to be their champion against the followers of Wycliffe. One of the Priors, Simon de Bovil, was in 1238 Chancellor of the University.

Cardinal Joyce, Sir Peter Besills, and many other illustrious men were buried in the Church, or in the graveyard.

In 1540, Henry the Eighth sold the site and buildings, with those of the Franciscans, for £1,094. An alderman, William Freer of Oxford, soon afterwards bought it, pulled down the church and most of the house, and sold the bells and the stones. He found a purchaser of the stones in Sir Thomas Pope, who used them to erect the wall which runs along Park Street, the enclosure of the grounds of Trinity College. The rood loft had been transported to the Church of St. Mary Magdalen. Not a vestige has been left. The Prior's house was standing in 1773, but even in Elizabeth's reign, Agas writes it down in his map as the Grey Friars, so utterly had its memory passed away. Coffins of lead containing skeletons, with parchment deeds and their seals, medals, and rings, have constantly been dug up, even so late as the last few years, during the excavations for the new drainage scheme.

THE FRANCISCANS.

The Franciscans were not long in following the Dominicans to Oxford. The first Grey Friars landed in England on September 10, 1224, three years after their brethren of St. Dominic. At the close of October two of their number went on to Oxford. One was Father Richard de Ingerworth, a priest some thirty years old—the first of his Order who had preached on this side the Alps. He afterwards became first

socius or adjunct to Fra Agnello of Pisa, the Provincial of England, and finally Provincial of Ireland. The other was a novice, Richard of Devonshire, a youth in minor orders, famed even then for his obedience and his patience. This virtue they sadly needed. For as they journeyed on to Oxford, after passing Baldon, a village north of Dorchester, because the floods were out they were unable to go further. So they asked for hospitality at a monastic grange, some six miles off Oxford, perhaps at Great Milton, probably at Culham. They implored the monks to give them food for they were starving, and shelter from the wild beasts that prowled about in the forest. Their strange dress, almost, says the Chronicler of Lanercost, *omnis fatui nati*, that "of any born fool," puzzled the brother porter. He took in their message to the Prior, who, with a sacristan, cellerar, and novice, formed the small community. Either they were thought to be mummers, let in for the sake of a little honest amusement, and driven out again when the mistake was discovered; or, as Bartholomew of Pisa has it, the grave Superior would have nothing to do with strolling players, and bade the porter to send them about their business. The Benedictine novice seems to have detected a look of higher things in the humble pair. At all events, when the other inmates of the grange were in bed he stole down to the porter, and bade him let them into the hay-loft, while he went and brought them bread and wine. The brother did so, and the novice commended himself to their prayers. That night he dreamt a terrible dream. He saw the Prior and his community before the Just Judge, and a man dressed in the strange garb of the strangers, the poor man of Assisi, witnessing against them. He awoke and found his brethren struggling in their beds and gasping for breath, and the sudden death of the Prior but shortly after made such an impression on all around that Rading, the Lord Abbot of Osney, became a Franciscan. But the two were off betimes, and found a hearty welcome at the Dominicans of the Jewry, dining in their refectory and sleeping in their dormitory for a week. Then they took a house from Robert the Mercer, just within the south western part of the walls, between Little Gate and St. Ebbe's Church. There they stayed till summer time, and left for Northampton. They had possessed no public chapel, but the good seed was sown, and the people of Oxford welcomed them back when kindly Richard the Miller let them another house and a farm hard by, close to where they

lived, but outside the walls. Here they were soon joined by many graduates and men of good birth of the University. The first Guardian, or Superior of the house, was William of Esseby, till then a novice, yet so far advanced in the true spirit of a religious that, when asked by the Provincial of France while in that country if he wanted to go to his native land, his answer was he really did not know whether he wanted, because his will was no longer his own, but his Superior's. The building commenced on the site of the miller's house. The foundation began in the strictest poverty. Even the infirmary, where we should expect the most comfort, was no higher than a man's stature. Neither was there for several years any guest house, so important a part of a large religious house. The site they occupied was very circumscribed and insufficient. In 1221, however, a wealthy citizen of Oxford, one Thomas Wanlong, gave them an additional plot of ground. To this the Archdeacon of Oxford, Richard Mepham, a very learned man, added another piece of ground. A certain Lady Agnes made them a present of a property which is now known by the name of Paradise. Ralph de Maidstone, Bishop of Hereford, who in after life became a Franciscan, was one of the benefactors through whose generosity the church was begun. The building went on quickly, for the good people of Oxford gladly gave a hand and worked with a will for the popular friars. The sight of a quondam bishop and a former abbot carrying the stones and the mortar with the rest of their brethren must have served as a spur to their zeal.

As the bulk of their property lay outside the castle wall, leave was obtained from Henry the Third to close the lane which ran under the fortifications from Watergate to a postern near the castle, and to level the wall for that distance, provided they built another round their convent grounds. But as these were now so extensive, they seem not to have availed themselves of the permission, but to have opened a postern through the wall instead, while a chapel the friars were building on the north of their property was allowed to serve as a portion of the contemplated wall. King Henry had given them an island across the Trill Mill Stream, and allowed them to build a bridge to connect it with their house. This islet became a pleasant garden and a well shaded grove. The King was fond of coming from his palace at Beaumont to the friars, and they gave him the exceptional privilege of right of entry into their inner

cloister. Fra Agnello di Pisa, the soul of the Order's first works in England, erected a humble lecture room, and to save his young religious from mixing with the turbulent spirits in the public schools, he secured the services of a succession of able professors from without. Grostête, then one of the first scholars of his day, headed the list; then came Peter, afterwards a Bishop somewhere in Scotland, Roger de Wesenham, afterwards Bishop of Lichfield, and Thomas the Welshman, who became Bishop of St. David's. Both these last were officials of the diocese under Grostête, the former Dean, the second Archdeacon of Lincoln. With such masters no wonder a school of eminent theologians was formed. About 1248 Father Adam Marsh, or De Marisco, the *Doctor Illustris*, was appointed lector or professor, the first of a long line who made Oxford famous throughout Europe. His successor was Eustace de Normanville, who had been in the world a gentleman of fortune, and who became Chancellor of the University.

In 1309, Clement the Fifth gave the Franciscans the house and property of the Friars of Penitence of the Sack, on the suppression of their Order by a decree of the Council of Lyons, which limited the number of mendicant orders. Several of these religious joined the Franciscans. The number of students from all parts of the world who came to study in the convent was the reason of this gift. The site included the ruins of two extinct parish churches, St. Budoc's and St. Bennet's, and brought the boundary of the convent on the west right up to the stream which runs from the castle mill into Trill Mill Stream. An entry from Friars Street, now Church Street, their northern limit, led out from the Convent Close through the City Walls into the city, possibly the present Penson's Gardens, but the chief entrance was in the street that led from Preacher's Bridge to Little Gate.

Meantime the buildings went on apace. Friar Henry de Reresby, the Socius of the Father Guardian of Oxford, appeared after his death to his late Superior, and told him that if the Franciscans were not lost on account of the grandeur of their buildings and their want of fidelity to the spirit of their rule, they would at least be grievously punished. The warning seems to have been little heeded. New lecture-rooms had been built, and were in use when Wesenham was professor. The church grew and grew. Among its many benefactors was the wealthy and open-handed Richard, King of the Romans, by

whom it was greatly enlarged. His wife, Beatrice de Falkenstein, was buried before the high altar in 1277, under a splendid tomb. William of Worcester again comes to our help to enable us to realize the size of the church. He has noted down that the choir was 136 feet long and the nave 180, making the total length 316, twice the present length of Christ Church. The total breadth, apparently at the transepts, was 180 feet, 60 feet broader than those of the Cathedral Church. The nave was 40 feet broad, and there were twelve side chapels, each 12 feet by 12; in the north aisle, each window of these chapels had three compartments, and all were filled with stained glass.

The libraries of the convent, for there were two, were of some note. One was reserved for friars who had taken their degrees, the other was open even to the lay-students, of whom many—as was the case in the other religious homes—were entrusted by their friends to the care of the friars and lived in their house. Grostête is said to have erected the libraries, and he left to them his collection of books. His friend, Adam Marsh, bought a number of Hebrew Bibles at the time of the expulsion of the Jews. Many years after, in 1433, let us hope under pressure of bad times, a part of the books were sold. They were bought by Dr. Thomas Gascoigne, Chancellor of the University. Other sales took place afterwards. Some of the volumes were given to Balliol library, and there they are to this day.

The roll of celebrities of the Franciscan house at Oxford is long. Perhaps no religious house can boast of one so glorious. The names of Roger Bacon and of Duns Scotus need no praise from us. Nor that of the Hebrew scholar and commentator, Nicholas de Lyra.

Then there was William Occham, the brilliant founder of the nominalist school of philosophy, the turbulent advocate of Cæsarism and of extreme views about evangelical poverty. One of the students, Peter Philardo of Cyprus, styled the "Doctor Refulgens," afterwards became Pope under the title of Alexander the Fifth. Friar Bungay was like Friar Bacon in his love of natural science, and like him too in the evil repute it gained him of being a magician. He lectured at Cambridge as well as at Oxford. His successor was John Peckham, the professor of St. Thomas of Hereford—*facile princeps* among the teachers of his day, a great student of science, who after being summoned to Paris and then to Rome, was named Archbishop of Canterbury in 1279. Others friars of this house obtained

the mitre, William Gainsborough, professor of theology, then Master of the Sacred Palace, created Bishop of Worcester in 1302; and William of Alnwick, made Bishop in Southern Italy.

The brethren of the heroic Friar Peto, the trusted friends of Catharine of Arragon, met with as little sympathy from the English Herod, as did the followers of Duns Scotus from the humanists of their times. The dissolution in 1539 found the convent in true Franciscan poverty. The site, some five acres in extent, was divided into three lots, and let to various burgesses of Oxford. It was at last sold to one Richard Gunter and his wife, who soon levelled church and house, cut down the trees, and the very memory of the site is well-nigh passed away.

THE CARMELITES.

If the Crusaders brought back from the East many things which Christendom would have been better without, we have to thank them for transplanting to Europe the venerable Order of Mount Carmel. The first of that body who came to England arrived about 1238, nor was it long before some of the White Friars, so called from their white cloaks, came to study at Oxford. But for some time they had no regular house. St. Simon Stock, the English glory of the Order, was one of their earliest students here. He took his degree about 1244. Ten years later Lord Noel de Meules, of Somersetshire, a former Governor of Oxford Castle, gave them a site on Stockwell Street, now Worcester Street, which ran from Broken-hays, or Gloucester Green, to the Manor of Walton. It was where the southern portion of Worcester College now stands. In 1256 a very rich burgess of the town, Nicholas Stockwell, from whom the street probably took its name, finding the site so confined that the monks were unable to erect a chapel and other buildings which they required, gave them a courtyard adjoining. On this, with the leave of the monks of Osney, for it was in their parish of St. Thomas', and supported by such powerful friends as Ela Countess of Warwick, Richard Earl of Cornwall, and Lord Noel de Meules, a chapel was erected. Ten years later another narrow strip of ground, running down to the river, was purchased by them for garden and pleasure-grounds, now part of Worcester College Gardens.

There was a Friar Bastion in the community who as poet laureate had sung the victories of Edward the First over the Scotch. When Edward the Second went on his ill-starred

expedition to Scotland, he took with him this religious, then Prior of the Oxford house, to sing his successes. As the luckless King fled from the rout of Bannockburn, he vowed to our Lady to build a house in England for the White Friars should he cross the borders in safety. But when he reached York, the royal treasury was empty, and so Friar Bastion suggested that he should make over to his Order the royal palace of Beaumont, facing the then White Friars' convent. The grant was made in a Parliament at York of the "manse of our manor," and it was ordered that twenty-four friars, students of theology, should be there maintained—a pension of five marks per annum being allowed for each by the King. The Carmelites let their old house and grounds to the Benedictines of Gloucester Hall, and King Edward gave to them two additional tenements opposite that building on their side of Stockwell Street.

The palace, so often the home of our sovereigns, the birth-place of Cœur de Lion, continued to serve as a royal residence, and Henry the Sixth, among others, lived there. So healthy was the site esteemed, that invalids begged to be allowed to board and lodge there, and many were the benefactions the house thereby received. A large and handsome church was erected on the southern portion of the site, thanks to the generosity of Henry the Fifth and of one of his successors. The tower erected over the room in which Richard the First was born had a peal of bells. Several splendid monuments adorned the church.

There were two lecture rooms, one for theology and another for philosophy, from which issued a host of celebrities of the Carmelite Order. Perhaps the best known is Richard Lavingham of Ipswich, a professor of theology, who as confessor of Richard the Second and a famed preacher against Lollardism, was murdered by the communistic followers of Wat Tyler with Simon of Sudbury, the Archbishop of Canterbury. He left behind him a number of works, of which a list of sixty-two is extant.

Among the lay-students who lived in this house was Reginald Pole, afterwards Cardinal Archbishop of Canterbury.

The library was a long room, near the church, where a large number of manuscripts were carefully chained to the desks. The refectory frequently served as banqueting hall for our kings at Christmas and Easter time.

At the dissolution the whole site, an area of over

eight acres, was let for £3 4s. But a few years later, 1541, Henry the Eighth sold it to Edmund Powell, of Sandford, one of the many cormorants of the day, for £388, subject to an exchange of seven farms the vendor possessed at Windsor. Powell pulled down a great part of the building, and we find in the Oxford records a load of the stones being carted in 1546 to St. Frideswide's. The refectory served for a few years as a refuge or workhouse to the poor, who had lost their best friends by the dissolution of religious houses, till 1596, when it was pulled down, and Archbishop Laud afterwards employed the stones to build the new quadrangle at St. John's College.

Some remains of the church were still standing when some years back Beaumont Street was made, and now the only memory of the great Carmelite house is the so called Friars' Entry, which bears the name of what was the approach to their convent from Magdalen Street, facing the west end of Magdalen Church.

THE AUSTIN FRIARS.

In the year 1252, memorable for a great plague, some friars of the Order of St. Augustine took a small house near the schools in Oxford. They had made their mark abroad as men of learning and holiness, and Pope Innocent the Fourth the previous year had given them the privilege common to mendicant orders of founding houses throughout Christendom. They soon attracted notice, and met with a noble benefactor in the person of Sir John Handlow of Borstall, in Buckinghamshire, who purchased a site for them outside the city walls in Holywell parish. It was bounded on one side by Beaumont Street, now called Park Street, and on another by Holywell Street. Pope Gregory the Tenth confirmed the gift, the royal authority approved it, and a Mayor of Oxford added two additional plots of ground. Upon this large site Sir John built from a quarry of his own not far off, a church and house of cut stone for the friars. The timber he procured from Shotover, of which forest he seems to have been the ranger. He died before the whole was completed, but his heirs faithfully fulfilled his instructions to finish what he had begun. The friars had at first, like the Benedictines and Cistercians, attended lectures at the Franciscans, but the discussions waxed so hot, that Archbishop Peckham, himself a Franciscan, forbade their attendance, and they began to have lectures at

home. Later on a spacious hall for theology, and another for philosophy, were built, so spacious that from 1267 till the middle of the fifteenth century, when the magnificent Divinity School was completed, the public defensions of theology of the University were carried on at the Augustinians, and the disputations of logic and philosophy even till the dissolution, every Batchelor of Arts being obliged to dispute there once a year with the friars. So crowded was the hall on one occasion that a plague broke out, and for a year the discussions of theology were transferred to St. Mary's Church. So that "doing Austin's" was a phrase in use, till the beginning of this century, for what was left of the old system of scholastic tourneys.

Capgrave, the historian and panegyrist of the Henrys, the counsellor and confessor of Henry the Fifth and of his brother Humphrey of Gloucester, John Low, or Lobbe, confessor to the sainted Henry the Sixth, a learned theologian, and afterwards Bishop, first of St. Asaph's, and then of Rochester, John Banard, who was Chancellor of the University in 1411, are some of the many celebrities of this house.

At the suppression Henry the Eighth let the whole of the buildings to Thomas Carwarden, who rapidly turned them into money by selling the stone and the timber. Edward the Sixth sold the property to the Duke of Suffolk, and in King James' time it had come into the hands of the city, to whom the fair at the priory gates brought in an annual revenue. Nicholas Wadham and his wife, the daughter of Sir William Petre of Ingateston, Catholics at heart, if not openly, had thoughts of building a College for English Catholic youth in Venice, but at last they resolved to make a new foundation at Oxford. Nicholas died before he could carry out his design, and Dame Dorothy completed the purchase of the old site of the Austin Friars, and began by levelling to the ground what ruins still remained, and erected her new college to the north of the old buildings.

One relic alone now remains—the brass of Walter Curzon and his wife Isabella, which was taken by his family at the suppression, and re-erected in their parish church at Waterperry. The name is dear to Oxford Catholics, for in their ancient mansion of Waterperry the Curzons always gave shelter to the hunted priest.

REWLEY.

Richard, King of the Romans, whose name has so frequently

occurred in these pages, left by will a foundation for three secular priests to pray for his soul. His son, the Earl of Cornwall, by what right it is hard to say, interpreted the legacy freely—"trusting that monks would pray more devoutly for his father"—and founded, somewhere about 1280, a monastery near Oxford for an abbot and fifteen monks of the Order of Cîteaux, then but lately reformed. The community were an offshoot of Thame Abbey. The founder endowed the house with nearly all his property in North Osney. An Oxford lady gave them her farm, Black Hall, in St. Giles', with twenty acres around it, and a meadow near Osney, in return for which she covenanted that the monks should pray for her soul and those of her parents. Owing to these benefactions the abbey grew, and from fifteen monks there came to be endowments for twenty-one, represented by a double row of elm trees, twenty-one in number, stretching from the outer to the inner gate, while one more stood for the abbot. Until Archbishop Chichele built St. Bernard's, the students of the Cistercian Order in Oxford generally made this abbey their home. Our Lady of Rewley stood on that portion of Osney which is on our right after we cross Hythe Bridge. A large gateway bearing the double-headed eagle of the King of the Romans, and the arms of his son, led up to the monastic buildings. A stone dug up in 1705 bore the record that Ela, Countess of Warwick, built a chapel there, *cujus premium sit Christus in gloriâ*. Another stone recorded *Elæ de Warwick Cometissæ viscera sunt hîc*. The abbey stood on the opposite side of the river to Worcester Gardens, and the church was on your right as you went up from the Great Gate, which stood due south. The buildings lay just behind the site of the North Western Station.

Henry the Eighth gave the abbey, with the manors of Wolvercote and Walton, once the property of Godstow, to his favourite doctor, Owen. But later the same year he took it back, and reserving to himself the bells and the lead, gave it to Christ Church. Mr. Parret, the 'then organist of Magdalen College, sold much of the stone of the church for the Lady chapel at St. Mary Magdalen's Church. In Hearne's days the Chapter House and a considerable portion of the house were still standing. The gateway existed till the London and North Western Station swept away all remains, save a portion of the enclosure wall, and a perpendicular gateway on the river side near Fisher's Row.

GLOUCESTER COLLEGE.

An Order so distinguished for scholarship and learning as that of St. Benedict could not keep outside the intellectual activity of Oxford, and though their founder loved the mountains and the valleys, the schools were the proper training-ground for his sons.

We find Benedictine students from Winchcombe Abbey at Oxford as early as 1175. St. Alban's and other houses also had students about the same time at the University.

In 1283, Sir John Giffard, of Brimesfield, founded a house for the young monks of Gloucester Abbey which was called Gloucester Hall, either from the Abbey to which it was attached, or from the original proprietor of the estate, Gilbert Clare, Earl of Gloucester, from whom it had passed by sale to the Knights of St. John.

It was on St. John's Day that the Baron of Brimesfield made his final arrangements with Abbot Reginald in his abbey of Gloucester for the new foundation. Its site is that of Worcester College of to-day.

When in 1278 William Brok, one of the student monks, took his doctor's cap at Oxford, the first, perhaps, of his Order, one hundred gentlemen, all the monks of his monastery, five great abbots, not to speak of bishops, all came on horseback to honour the event by their presence.

So successful was the foundation, so pleasant the site, that other Benedictine abbeys wished to share its advantages, and the liberal founder, in 1300, bought additional property, on which the various houses built each one a separate hall or manse for their students. A tax was levied on the Benedictine establishments by the General Chapter for this purpose. A scutcheon of the abbey over the door told to whom each hall belonged. All were subject to a common Superior. Of these halls there were twenty-five. Glastonbury, St. Alban's, Westminster, Canterbury, Abingdon, Bury St. Edmund's, were among those who shared in the benefits of Gloucester Hall. Magdalen, then called Buckingham, College, Cambridge, was the house of studies for the remaining abbeys at the sister University. The hall of Malmesbury can still be distinguished by a shield bearing a griffin; that of Norwich is next to it, signed with a plain cross; both on your left after passing by the hall on your way to the gardens. Poor Sir John, the generous founder, met a felon's death, being hung as a traitor in Edward the Second's reign outside the walls of Gloucester.

A chair of theology was established here in 1343. In 1420, the Benedictine bishops and abbots of England raised a chapel of such dimensions, that it was usually called the Church of St. Benedict. The chief benefactor was Abbot John de Wethamstede, of St. Alban's, who was so princely in his donations that public thanks were voted him in 1423, at a Chapter at Northampton, and he was named the second founder. He built the gateway, which still exists, at the north-east of the building facing Walton Place. To him the church owed its stained glass window representing the Crucifixion, our Lady and St. John the Baptist. He built a sacristy and the library which faced to the street, where are now the iron gates of the principal entrance. Humphrey of Gloucester gave to it largely of books. To these the literary abbot added his own works, with a Latin verse in each, assuring the thief who dared to steal them that the halter of Judas or the gallows would be his lot.

The refectory ran parallel to the library on the other side of a small quadrangle where the library now-a-days stands. The church occupied the site of the present chapel. Besides Abbot Wethamstede, this hall boasted of many illustrious scholars, Thomas Walsingham the historian, Winchcombe the chronicler of Evesham Abbey, and Thomas Mylling, a great student of Greek, who became Abbot of Westminster and then Bishop of Hereford. Anthony Kitchen, the well-known Bishop of Llandaff, was once Prior of this house.

When the great abbeys fell, Henry granted the place to a valet of his guard; but four years later he bestowed it on his new Bishop of Oxford for the episcopal palace. Somehow or other, like so much other spoil, it got back into the royal grasp in King Edward the Sixth's time, and we find that gatherer-in of church lands, Lord Williams of Thame, at work tearing down the church and the library to sell the materials. Queen Elizabeth, who kept the see of Oxford vacant for nine years that she and her favourites might enjoy its revenues, sold the place to a William Doddington. How Sir Thomas Whyte bought it, and how, in course of time, it became Worcester College, does not enter into our subject. We cannot help remarking that in Elizabeth's reign, under the name of St. John's Hall, it shared with Hart Hall the privilege of being a sort of refuge for Catholics, and that three out of four of its first principals were of the old faith. The first missionary bishop after the schism, Dr. Bishop, was one of the scholars.

DURHAM COLLEGE.

But a few years after the foundation of Gloucester College—in 1290—Mabel, the Abbess of Godstow “gave to God and our Lady Saint Mary and to St. Cuthbert,—and to the Prior and Convent of Durham,” lands near Canditch, the stream of clear water which ran in the moat outside the city wall, where now is Broad Street. At the same time the Prior and Canons of St. Frideswide made over on perpetual lease to the same monks two plots of land hard by. Other gifts were made by various burgesses of Oxford. Here Richard de Hotoun, Prior of Durham Abbey, built a college for the students from his monastery, whose monks paid two hundred marks yearly for their support. There was, however, no fixed endowment. In 1338, Edward the Third, in compliance with a vow he had made at the battle of Halidon Hill, gave up to the new college his advowson of one of the richest livings in the diocese of Durham. But for some reason or other, his intentions were never carried out: certainly not through any fault of the then Bishop of Durham, Richard Bury, the learned lover of books. For we find him in 1345 adding to the material building, and giving in addition money towards an endowment. After his death he made the college heir to his rare collection of books, which formed the first approach to a public library in the University. The building was erected in 1345, and it is still in existence on the east side of the quadrangle. Thirty years later, Bishop Hatfield gave four thousand marks, a splendid endowment, for eight monks and eight lay-students, youths from Durham and Yorkshire. In return they had to recite daily after meals the *De Profundis* and the prayer, *Deus qui inter Apostolicos*, for their founder and his friends.

In the college chapel, dedicated as was the college to the Blessed Trinity, our Lady, and St. Cuthbert, whose figure adorned the east window, there was a side chapel on the south side dedicated in 1421 to St. Nicholas, the patron of children, and St. Catharine, the patron of philosophical studies. On the screen were the following verses—

Who dares St. Cuthbert's land to steal
Will surely meet an evil end.

At the suppression of Durham Abbey, Henry the Eighth gave the college to his new chapter. The books of the library were dispersed, some going to Balliol, others to Duke Humphrey's,

the predecessor of Bodley's Library. When Edward the Sixth, or those who ruled in his name, thrust Bishop Tunstal into the Tower and dissolved his see, the college passed to the fortunate Court physician, Dr. Owen, who, when Queen Mary came to the throne, sold it to another, who, like himself, had grown fat on church spoils, Sir Thomas Pope, Lord of Tittenhanger, one of the manors of St. Alban's. Sir Thomas thereupon—let us hope in a spirit of reparation—founded the College of Trinity. Among the magnificent church plate which, with rich vestments and ornaments, he gave to the chapel, was a chalice which he had bought after the sacking of St. Alban's. The founder died in the last year of Mary's reign, and all his splendid gifts to the chapel, save the chalice, were swept away at the advent of Elizabeth. The President, Thomas Slythurst, was expelled for his faith, and like so many of his time, died a prisoner in the Tower in the following year, 1560. One of Sir Thomas Pope's first scholars, Christopher Wharton, who fled to Douai and was there ordained, was hung, drawn, and quartered at Knavesmire, outside York, for the same glorious cause.

CANTERBURY COLLEGE.

After two destructive plagues in 1349 and 1360 had thinned the attendance at the University, the Archbishop of Canterbury, Simon de Islip, bought a number of halls near St. Frideswide, and on their site built and endowed a hall for the monks of Canterbury and secular students. By a charter signed at Mayfield in 1363 he endowed twelve scholarships, four for monks of the Abbey of Christ Church, the rest for secular students. To this end he appropriated the livings of Mayfield and Pageham, and intended to add other gifts. A secular priest, bearing the ominous name of John Wyclif, had been appointed Warden, but was turned out at the suit of the monks, who from that time were the heads of the house. William Courtenay, Archbishop of Canterbury, added five scholarships for laymen, three of which were to be paid by the Archbishop of the time being. On one of these foundations no doubt Cardinal Morton sent his page, the future Chancellor of England, the martyr Thomas More, and here for two years he studied. Henry the Eighth at the dissolution of the house let it with its hall, chapel, and kitchen, for ten years, and then granted it to his College of Christ Church, where Canterbury Quadrangle occupies its site and preserves its name.

THE TRINITARIANS.

As one passes along the walk by the Cherwell in Christ Church Meadows between the Broad Walk and the Botanical Gardens—once the Jews' burial ground, there can be seen on the other side of the stream some slight remains of old Milham Bridge. A path used to lead across the meadows from the postern attached to St. Frideswide's by our Lady's Chapel in the Wall to St. Edmund's Well, on the opposite side of the further branch of the river, and which was reached by a second bridge. Between Milham Bridge and the East Gate, opposite to the south-east angle of the city walls, Edmund, Earl of Cornwall, purchased from the Hospital of St. John, which now forms part of Magdalen College, a site on which he erected a house and chapel for the Friars of the Order of the Redemption of Captives. Later on the community purchased Trinity Chapel, the property of St. Frideswide's, within the East Gate, and land adjoining, now the southernmost portion of New College Garden.

The plague in 1349 carried off nearly all the friars, and when in 1379 Bishop William of Wykham purchased their property, they wished to return to their old site. This they had let to Merton College, but to their surprise they found it had devolved to the Crown. Leave was given; but shortly after the city authorities distrained it for non-payment of rent. The town granted a lodging for one priest alone, and the house became a refuge for poor scholars under the name of Trinity Hall. A Trinitarian Father, John Amery, was Principal when the suppression came. Parrett the organist secured that post in 1546. He pulled down chapel and house and built in their stead a barn, a stable, and a pigstye. On the site by Milham Bridge the Jesuit Father Wolfe, a former member of the University, lived secretly for many years from 1622, working for souls, watched over and waited on by two faithful sisters who had devoted their lives to the service of God. Father Wolfe died in 1673 at the Dolphin Inn, in St. Mary Magdalen's parish. Beloved by his flock, his learning and piety seems to have found him many friends, especially at New College, and to them probably was owing his liberty in days of persecution.

THE CRUTCHED FRIARS.

The Crossbearing or Crouched Friars came into England in Henry the Third's reign. They settled first in Oxford near

Broadgates' Hall, now Pembroke College, by South Gate. Richard Cary, then Mayor of Oxford, made them a present of the site in the reign of Edward the First.

About 1348 they built themselves a house near St. Peter's in the East, on its south side, from the proceeds of a legacy left them by the good Mayor. The building was to serve as a house of studies for their Order at the University. But the Abbot of Osney ordered them off, and the bishop of the diocese backed up the command, and we hear no more of the house of the order. It seems to have been swallowed up by the large establishments which now surround St. Peter's.

ST. MARY'S COLLEGE.

Like the other religious, the Canons Regular, a rich and numerous body, sought to found a general house of studies for their young men in Oxford. Henry the Fifth had already granted them leave to acquire land for this purpose, but it was not till the reign of Henry the Sixth, and by a fresh permission, that, in 1435, Thomas Holden and his wife gave to the Order a large site lying between what are now Cornmarket Street, New Inn Hall Lane, and Queen Street. The founder began a chapel, which was completed after his death, and he and his good wife were buried there under a fair marble tomb with a brass bearing their effigies. Over the chapel a library was built, Holden having left £20 to buy books for it, as well as vestments and church stuff for the sacristy. The college was dedicated to our Lady, and was subject to the General Chapter of the Order. Besides the young monks there were a certain number of lay-students who lived outside in lodgings, when the College was full, but attended chapel and hall as in the other colleges, serving as acolytes or thurifers at the High Mass on feast days. Erasmus was a guest of Prior Charnock's here in 1497. The college lingered on after the suppression of the religious houses for some few years as a hall for students. Then it seems to have fallen into the hands of Lord Williams of Thame, whom we find in 1556 selling the timber and slate of the building. The very same year one John Feteplace—in the general restoration under Queen Mary—gave it back to the University as a secular hall, provided that the Canons Regular should not desire to have it again. But in the reign of Queen Elizabeth Lord Huntingdon obtained it, and his widow, in 1562, made it a sort of industrial, or blue coat school, for the poor of Oxford.

But the charity was not long-lived, and the buildings became the property of Brasenose College.

The beautiful chapel, or what remained of it, had passed into other hands, and was at length sold in 1656 to that College, which used the materials for the foundations of its new chapel. The Great Gate opposite to the New Inn Hall and a portion of the cloister leading to it still remain, showing the elaborate character of the former buildings.

ST. BERNARD'S.

Archbishop Chichele, before beginning his splendid foundation of All Souls, built a house of studies for the Cistercian or Bernardine monks, who up to this time had either been housed at Rewley or scattered about the town. Many of the religious, unwilling to be deprived of community life, declined to come to Oxford, and this was one of the motives which urged the Archbishop to build St. Bernard's. Founded in 1436, the last of the religious establishments, it is the one whose fabric has suffered the least. At first the front alone, with the curious kitchen vaulted in stone in the basement story, was completed. The south side and hall were not finished till 1505, and Bishop King, an old student of the house, consecrated the chapel as late as 1530.

At the suppression, which so shortly followed, Henry, as usual, took the bells and lead, but he gave the rest to Christ Church. Sir Thomas Whyte bought it in Queen Mary's reign to establish there his College of St. John.

Founded by a Catholic, the faith clung to it even in Elizabeth's reign. Alexander Belsire, the first President, was expelled for his faith, and so was his successor, William Elye, who becoming a religious across the seas, was thrown into Hereford Gaol, where he lay for a long time.

We cannot forget Father Campion's connection with the college, of which he was one of its earliest glories.

Honest Anthony à Wood, when recording the fall of the Franciscan House, dared not dwell on the thought lest his tears should stay his pen; and when Dr. Johnson "viewed the ruins of the Abbeys of Osney and Rewley, after at least half an hour's silence, he said, 'I viewed them with indignation.'" And grief and indignation must be the feelings uppermost in the mind of any one who reads these pages.

ERRATA.

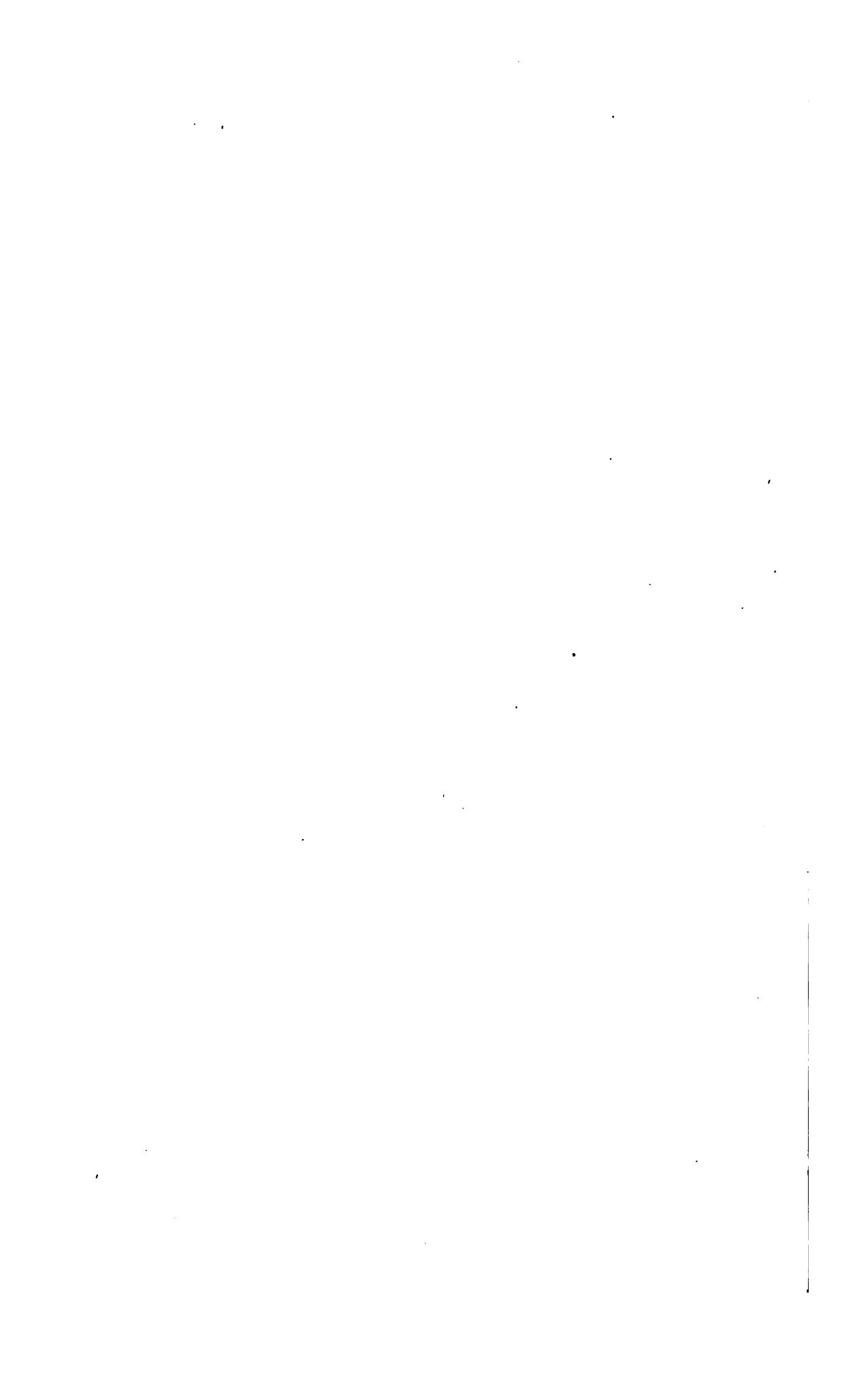
Page 8, line 10, St. Frideswide's cross stood in the church-yard which was on the north side of the Priory. A cross appears however to have been erected in what is now the Tom Quad.

Page 31, line 35, for *seems* read "seem."

In the *Plan of Oxford*, the chapel near Smith Gate is erroneously called St. Catharine's. Its real dedication was to Our Lady and St. Margaret, as is evident from Wood, Hearne, &c. The error arose from a statement in Ingram's *Memorials of Oxford*.

The writer begs to acknowledge the kindness of Major General Rigaud in calling his attention to these mistakes. The corrections arrived too late to be embodied in the text.

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Eyot, bore the name of Bury or Berry mead
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